

March 1997
Vol 4 No 3

Phoenix
OS/2
Society

extended attributes

The magazine of the OS/2 community

\$2.95 US (\$3.50 Canada)



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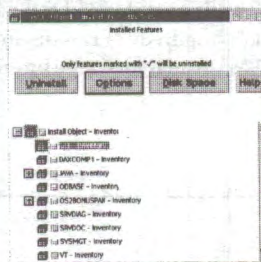
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extended attributes

extended attributes is the award winning monthly magazine of the Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc.

This issue of *extended attributes* was produced using OS/2, DeScribe 5.0, Lotus WordPro, FrameMaker 5.01, Enhanced Editor 6.03, TrueSpectra Photo>Graphics, and Impos/2. Camera ready images were printed on an IBM Lexmark 4039 10R laser printer

at 600 dpi. Printing was done by Adcraft Printing, Inc, Phoenix, AZ.

Deadline for article submissions is the 5th of the month prior to issue. Send articles to editor@possi.org or the Society's mailing address. Email reviews to Steve Gurnick (see next page). Email SIG news to Ernie Fisch (see next page).

For change of address, send an email to editor@possi.org or mail the form on page 13 to the Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc. *extended attributes* is mailed at bulk rate—the US Post Office will not forward!

Approximate circulation of this issue: 500.
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The truth is out there

by Bill Schindler

OS/2 is dead. OS/2 has sold more than 15 million. There's no applications. The press is in league with Microsoft. Some company is working on OS/2 software, while another has quit development a week before going into beta.

Sometimes, it seems as though every box of OS/2 contains one-but-ton connectivity into a non-stop rumor mill. Your friends, your co-workers, and especially everyone you bump into on the Internet seem to have heard *something* about OS/2.

But how much is true and how much is just air warming somebody's teeth?

In this issue of *extended attributes*, we try to dig out some of the facts behind the rumors. It's not an easy task. Many people come to believe the rumors because they've heard them so many times. And some people don't want you to know the truth.

In the process of producing this issue, we had that one fact ham-

pered home several times: getting to the bottom of what's going on is often close to impossible.

For instance, at ColoradOS/2, IBM announced that an OS/2 VoiceType software development kit (SDK) would be available 90 days after the release of the Win95 version. Ninety days passed. No SDK.

So, we tried to determine the actual status of the OS/2 SDK. More rumors surfaced. IBMers pointed fingers at other IBMers. Responsible parties didn't (or wouldn't) respond to requests for information, but they whined when we went over their heads.

The dust hasn't settled yet, but one thing is clear at this point. There's no OS/2 VoiceType SDK in the works anywhere at IBM.

One drop at a time

I really wish I could tell you that we kill hundreds of rumors in this issue. Unfortunately, we're limited by both

available space and available volunteer energy.

But what's here is a start.

We may not have another "rumor vs reality" issue for a while, but you can expect to see more articles in future issues that address the subject.

Coming up in *ea*

Speaking of future issues, we have a variety of interesting things coming. If you'd like to write for one of our upcoming issues (experts on specific topics are *always* welcome), send me an email, and we'll talk about it.

○ April issue: fun and games
○ May issue: Warping the Internet
○ June issue: speech recognition
Plus there's our usual mix of reviews, software announcements, commentary, and OS/2 news.

Oh, and if you have information that might help us clear up a rumor, then please *please* email me! ☺

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The Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc (POSSI) is an organization of computer users with an interest in IBM's OS/2 operating system.

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on the bitstream Who are we?

by Esther Schindler



At some point, I suppose, I have to put my money where my mouth is. In last month's column, I complained to the vice president of marketing for IBM PSP (Personal Software Products) that IBM needed better demographics of OS/2 users. While Donn Atkins admitted that he needed better information on the topic, it occurred to me that I could begin to collect data on my own.

I had already arranged to review (in my "day job") an application called Decisive Survey from Decisive Technology (www.decisive.com). This Windows program promises to help you design, manage, and evaluate surveys. It can collect responses automatically using an email program, and it can create and manage surveys across the Web. (As an aside, it doesn't work especially well in WinOS2, but it's a lovely program otherwise.)

When I began work on the software review, I was already contemplating how I could best address "rumor versus reality" for this issue of *extended attributes*. I decided to design an OS/2 end-user survey and limit it to members of the Phoenix OS/2 Society (POSSI), especially since I only had the hundred-response version of the software. Besides, I liked the idea of testing the Decisive Survey using better questions than "What is your favorite color?"

I don't pretend that the information I gathered is representative of the entire OS/2 user community. The 36 people who responded (via a private page on POSSI's Web site, and using a paper survey at the February general meeting) are probably a valid representation of POSSI members, but I doubt it's a useful sample of the computing industry at large. However, at the very least, we have information that can help the user group refine its services to better serve the membership. At best—well, this is more information than IBM has. Frightening, isn't it?

A few notes on survey technique: this survey was self administered. Not every respondent answered every question. I advised people who

used more than one computer to respond based on the system they use most often. (Bear with me in this column. It's heavy on statistics.)

Here's the reality of who we are.

Our demographics

Most of the 36 respondents (24) have upgraded to OS/2 Warp 4. Eleven of us are still using OS/2 Warp 3. Nobody is using an earlier version, at least not on their "main" machine.

We have been using OS/2 for quite a while. Only 8 respondents have been using OS/2 for less than three years. Nearly all of us installed OS/2 ourselves.

Significantly, *everyone* uses OS/2 at home. 42% use OS/2 both at home and at work, but no one uses OS/2 just at work. (This is probably reflective of the nature of user group members overall; statistically, most computer user groups don't have a high percentage of corporate users.)

I asked respondents how they would classify themselves.

- 11% are predominantly corporate users
- 20% use OS/2 in a small business
- 46% are home users
- 17% are a "lone OS/2 business user in a sea of non-OS/2 computing."

Since so many are using OS/2 at home, it's no surprise that 68% said their computer is not connected to a network.

Or, at least, the computer isn't connected to a Local Area Network. Every member of the group owns a modem and accesses the Internet. However, that's a self-selecting set, since most responses came from a Web site. On the other hand, in general meetings, we've established that every attendee has Internet access. Nearly all (94%) of the Internet access is via modem.

At least 18 of the 24 OS/2 Warp 4 users installed VoiceType Dictation; 14 installed the Java development kit.

From a statistical viewpoint, we're an attractive bunch of people. In particular, we're incredibly educated: 42% of the respondents have postgraduate education, in addition

to the third that completed college. While our ages range from 25 on up, 61% of us are between 35 and 54. 25% of us are retired. Members represent nearly every industry, though 55% say their jobs are related to the computer industry.

Computer expertise

User group members are traditionally technically savvy, but POSSI stands out from the rest.

Most of us consider ourselves to be technical experts ("people come to me for advice") or wizards ("people pay me for advice, or they ought to!"). Still, a third of the membership said they were "comfortable" with technology ("I can do what I need to"); nobody admitted to being a computer novice.

I also asked about our comfort level with technology. 24% of respondents said they were early adopters (they'll install beta software); 58% are technical enthusiasts (they're apt to install version 1.0). 18% of our membership described themselves as mainstream users, people who prefer to use technology after it's been accepted. I think this item is particularly important (even in our small sample size) because any technology's hardest leap is between the "techies" and the mainstream users. The fact that nearly 20% of our membership considers themselves in that category is a very positive statement about OS/2's acceptance.

We're a very technically literate group. 72% of respondents said that they use other operating systems. Those who used other operating systems used an average of 2.41 different OSs. We certainly know what the competition offers!

Perhaps that's because POSSI's membership has been using personal computers for quite a while. Only two people have used PCs for less than six years.

Purchasing power

Several questions asked the members about their purchasing history. I asked how many applications the respondent had purchased in the last



Application purchases in the last year

	OS/2	Windows	DOS	Non-OS/2 compatible
None	1	10	19	18
1-3	10	16	12	13
4-5	12	4	3	3
5-8	8	2	0	1
9-12	2	1	0	0
12 or more	2	1	1	0

year in different categories. (Shareware registrations do, of course, count as a purchase.)

Not only do our members purchase OS/2 applications, but we buy a lot of OS/2 applications. (See table 1.) Only one respondent hadn't purchased an OS/2 application in the last twelve months. A whopping 69% of us bought 4 or more native OS/2 applications in that time period. 11% purchased 9 or more native OS/2 applications.

In comparison, only 23% purchased 4 or more Windows applications during the same time period. It would be inaccurate to say that POSSI members no longer purchase Windows applications, but we certainly buy very few. 10 of the 34 respondents (29%) hadn't purchased a Windows application in the last year, and 16 more (47%) bought between one and three. (As a result, when a well-intentioned Windows application vendor offered the user group a review copy, we turned them down. If our members don't buy Windows applications, why should we devote editorial space to the topic? Of course, we were quick to point out that our membership does buy plenty of OS/2 applications, and we would love to review any native OS/2 program. The way to a company's heart is through its pocket-book.)

Shareware experiences

	Tried	Registered
None	2	9
1-3	11	15
4-5	7	6
5-8	8	2
9-12	1	0
12 or more	6	0

11% purchased 4 or more DOS applications in the last year. 11% bought more than three applications that won't run on OS/2.

Members were also asked about their shareware experiences (Table 2). Nearly everyone has tried at least a few OS/2 shareware titles, and a lot of it gets registered. My conservative estimates, based on the ranges I gave people, indicate that between 30-40% of the shareware our members try gets paid for. 72% registered at least one title in the last year, and 25% registered more than three applications; those statistics should make shareware authors smile.

How do we find out what applications are available in the first place? Obviously, few people have a single source; most respondents provided five answers. Figure 1 provides more detail. Our membership learns about OS/2 applications predominantly from the user group (it's no surprise that 31 people would check that answer!), followed by magazine advertisements (22), mail order catalogs (20), magazine reviews (19), and files found online at ftp sites, CompuServe forums, etc. (17). Only one person learned about OS/2 applications from a retail store; 4 and 5 (respectively) learned about OS/2 applications from an IBM or another company representative.

Our hardware is more modest than I expected. While 70% of the respondents are using Pentiums, 27% use 486 class computers. We put the money elsewhere: 55% have between 16 MB and 32 MB of RAM; 24% have between 32 MB and 64 MB.

We aren't cheapskates when it comes to buying computers. 50% of the respondents said their work computer cost between \$2,000 and \$5,000; 75% of the home computers were in that range. (In both cases,

four people paid less than \$2,000 for their computers.)

Clearly, we buy "toys." 85% of us have multimedia cards, 33% have a scanner, and 42% have a laptop computer. I was particularly surprised to learn that 15% of us have digital cameras; these are new gizmos!

Our viewpoints

IBM has invested considerable effort in communicating its vision. How well does it agree with our own?

Network computing is a big part of IBM's marketing strategy. Unfortunately, they haven't done a good job explaining what that means to POSSI members, because only 33% of us understand it well enough to describe to another person. 6% never heard of it, 21% have heard the term but don't know what it means, and 39% are vaguely familiar with the subject.

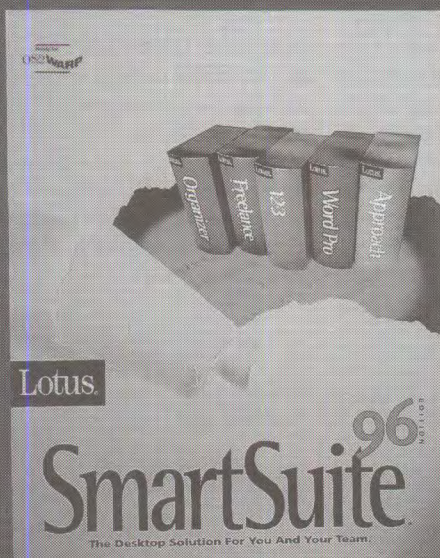
Java is also a part of the IBM network computing strategy, so I asked how important Java was to *you*. The answer is: it depends. On a range from "not at all important" (scored as 1) to "extremely important" (scored as 5), the mean was 2.73. In other words, POSSI members think that Java is slightly-to-somewhat important to us personally. However, it's important to note that the answers to this question ranged widely. Interestingly, respondents who work in the computer industry graded Java's importance only slightly higher, at 2.94.

One important question is *why* we use OS/2. I gave plenty of choices, then limited the 33 respondents to five answers. Everyone had different reasons to use OS/2 (which you can see in Figure 2) but some answers came out well ahead of the others:

- ☐ Multitasking/multithreading (23)
 - ☐ Robustness (21)
 - ☐ Windows application support (17)
 - ☐ OS/2's technical features (15)
- Using the same list of features, members were asked what needed the most improvement. This time there was clear consensus: 82% said that IBM needed to improve OS/2's marketing. In second place (67%) was OS/2 application availability, followed by Windows support (42%).

Introducing Lotus' new desktop suite designed for OS/2 Warp, Lotus SmartSuite.[®] Optimized for both individual and workgroup productivity, SmartSuite 96 offers five leading applications to help you get work done. Sound like something you could use? Well now you can. New OS/2 versions of Word Pro and Freelance Graphics help you get connected with easy Internet access and breakthrough team computing features. And, since our OS/2 versions of 1-2-3[®], Approach[®] and Organizer[®] are still in development,

Now, there's only one thing left to say to OS/2 users looking for a suite.



There's more where this came from.

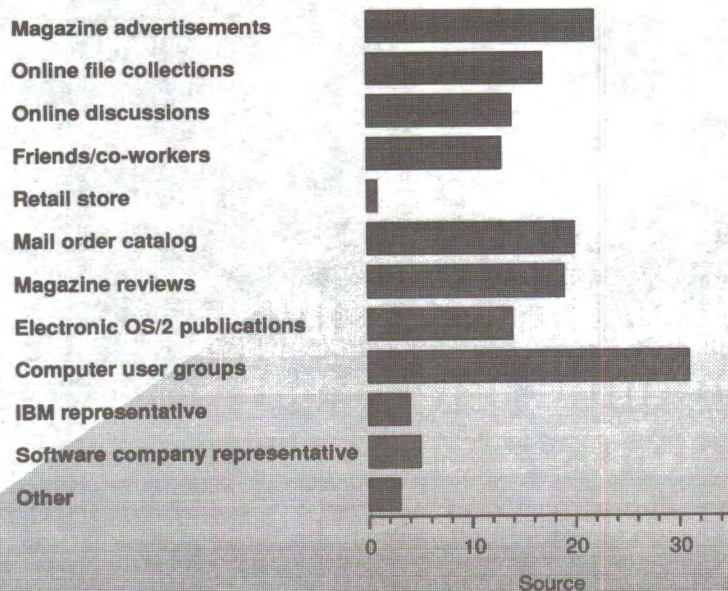
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Learning about OS/2 application availability

Where do we find out about them?



Nonetheless, we're impressively happy with OS/2, and we expect to stay that way. 64% of respondents said they were "extremely satisfied" with OS/2, and the remainder said they were "somewhat" satisfied. 55% said they would "definitely" be using OS/2 this time next year. 36% said "probably would" and only 9% said they "might or might not" be using OS/2. No one expected to drop OS/2.

Our opinions are less positive about IBM. I asked respondents to answer, "How committed is IBM to growing the OS/2 market?" on a 1-to-10 scale (with 1 "not at all committed" and 10 at the top). The mean was 3.48. (In contrast, I recently asked OS/2 software developers the same question; their answer was 2.43.)

Conclusions

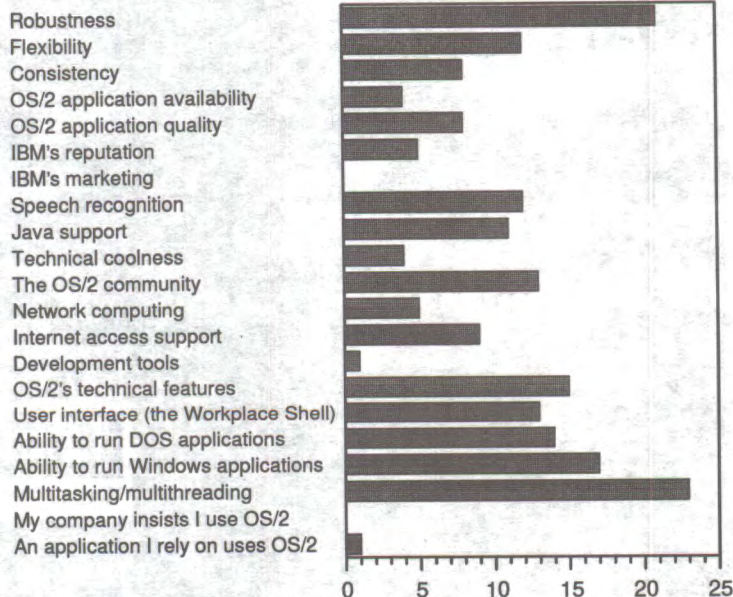
The results I evaluate here are a small sample, just 20% of POSSI's current membership. If you're a member, feel free to add to the data collection by answering the survey at www.possi.org/shortusr.htm. (By the time you read this, a "public" survey based on this one will probably be available at Indelible Blue's Web site.)

However, based on the information we have at hand, some things are crystal clear about our group.

We're intelligent, or at least we're well-educated in both generic terms and technical subjects. We don't limit our knowledge to OS/2; most use other operating systems at least sporadically. POSSI members buy OS/2 applications, and we support OS/2 vendors. We care most about product quality (robustness and technical features), and we love OS/2. We aren't convinced that IBM feels the same way.

A few months ago, Bill Schindler opined that IBM should market OS/2 to technically savvy computer users. OS/2 can appeal to those "who want more from their computers," in the same way that Hasselblad and Porsche sell to the people who are willing to pay extra for quality. Certainly, that's a perfect description of our user group's membership. ☺

Reasons we use OS/2



feature In their own words

by Bill Schindler

Microsoft. Bill Gates. Those words usually get a response, often emotional, from anyone who's been involved with computers for more than a couple months.

Some people will tell you that Gates and Microsoft are the saviors of the computer industry. That they've created standards where none would exist. That they brought order to the chaotic microcomputer industry. Gates is often credited with an unwavering consistent vision. His billionaire status is seen as proof of the ultimate rightness of that vision. Microsoft's dominance in personal computing software is seen as proof that their products are the best.

Yet, there are others who will tell you that Gates is the anti-christ, a demon incarnate. His billions ill-gotten through the calculated destruction of his competitors and sometimes even his allies. That Microsoft's success is built on luck and a web of lies. That Microsoft's "standards" are leading the industry into stagnation, and Gates' much-vaunted vision wavers like a mirage on the desert.

Where does the reality lie?

In this article, I let Bill Gates and Microsoft speak for themselves. I step in here and there to highlight a point or insert historical perspective, but otherwise their words stand on their own.

Romancing OS/2

In April 1987, IBM and Microsoft jointly announced OS/2. The first version never acquired much market share. (Numbers given by the press ranged from 300,000 to a million.)

"I will never, ever talk anybody out of supporting OS/2 or doing native work," Cameron Myhrvold, manager of Microsoft Developer Relations Group, *PC Week*, Dec 17, 1990.

"Windows helps OS/2 because ... every Windows app is a good reason to buy OS/2. If you want a high-end operating system, you are only going to find one high-end operating system that runs Windows applications, and that will be OS/2." Bill Gates, *Computing Canada*, March 28, 1991.

"Developers like the high-end features of OS/2 so, at Microsoft, OS/2 is very prevalent." Bill Gates, *PC User*, April 24, 1991.

"OS/2 has not sold well. Microsoft invested heavily in it and we're continuing to invest in it. It's not clear what version will spark its sales. We're committed to it; we're doing new versions." Bill Gates, *Software Magazine*, Sept 1991.

"This attempt to become a clone operating system is a ridiculous thing because you can never be a better Windows than Windows. You'll always be behind and slower. You're going to see this thing diffuse very quickly because [IBM] made some big claims about running in four MB as a faster system, more reliable, more usable, more capable system." Bill Gates, *Computing Canada*, April 13, 1992.

Only a year and two weeks earlier, Gates had bragged up OS/2's planned ability to run Windows applications.

"You should get a copy (of OS/2). Don't let them reinstall it for you, install it yourself. Try and use it on someone's clone hardware because they've made sure it doesn't run well on non-IBM hardware." Bill Gates, *Computing Canada*, April 13, 1992.

"In the sense that OS/2 is a dead end! It's got this semistrange Windows emulation right now. But IBM doesn't get Windows code after next year. When that goes away it's not a portable operating system, not a multiprocessor operating system, not a secure operating system. OS/2 doesn't have a future." Bill Gates, *Forbes*, Dec 7, 1992.

Four years later, OS/2 Warp 4 shipped, with Windows code still built in.

According to the Bill Gates biography, *Gates* (Manes & Andrews), back around June of 1990, Gates met with some Lotus employees. After a few drinks, he started talking. Later, what Gates said ended up in a Lotus memo that was then leaked to the press. The book continues: "According to the [Lotus] memo, Gates had no intention of limiting Windows to entry-level systems. On the contrary, Gates said,

'Six months after Windows 3 ships it will have a greater market share than PM will ever have—OS/2 applications don't have a chance.' And just to make sure, he had greased the skids under Presentation Manager, admitting 'that Microsoft is dragging its feet on OS/2—OS/2 has been slowed down because of bugs... What incentive does Microsoft have to get it out the door before Windows 3?' Gates asked pointedly."

Persistence of vision

"Upside: What market penetration goals do you have for NT? [Bill] Gates: The first year or two, 15 or 20 percent of the market. Over time—give us 4 years—everything will shift over to NT." *Upside*, April 1992.

"Windows NT is a server. And it's also for people who are very demanding for the desktop, a way of getting advanced capabilities on the desktop." Bill Gates, *Datamation*, July 15, 1992

"Windows NT is designed to be a server in small-to-medium workgroups and departments, in addition to being our high-end desktop operating system." Dwayne Walker, Microsoft Dir of Windows NT and Networking Products, *Datamation*, July 15, 1992

"We expect that 70% to 80% of Windows users will use Windows 3.1 on their desktops. Windows NT will account for maybe 20% of desktops and a large number of servers." Dwayne Walker, Microsoft Dir of Windows NT and Networking Products, *Datamation*, July 15, 1992

"NT will sell far more on the desktop than anywhere else, just because of the size of that business. It helps us a lot in the server market as well, but the numbers will be largely on the desktop." Bill Gates, *PC Week*, Jan 18, 1993

"If you don't know what you need NT for, then you probably don't need it." Bill Gates, mid-1993.

And in the end

"It will be some finite number of years—and I don't know the number—before our doom will come." Bill Gates, *Forbes*, Dec 7, 1992. ☺

feature Whither OS/2?

By Elliot Abramowitz

Shortly after a recent IBM-sponsored event, I found myself wondering about the company's commitment to OS/2. My thoughts wandered back to my experience at Fall COMDEX 96.

Comdex, for instance

Most people will tell you that attending COMDEX gives you the opportunity to see the latest and greatest hardware and software. Occasionally you can catch a glimpse of what is coming down the pike in the not too distant future.

But COMDEX is instructive in other ways as well. What is it that companies *aren't* showing? What markets are their presentations geared towards? In what direction do they think the market is heading? Who are they partnered with to get there?

As a member of Team OS/2, I walked through the exhibition halls on Sunday, talking to vendors and asking them to demonstrate their hardware or software using OS/2. If the answer was "Yes," I would radio in a request that an install team should be sent out to that exhibitor. I did find one, Twinhead; but in the process I also discovered that most firms had shipped pre-configured demonstration systems to COMDEX. While installing OS/2 on demo systems was a good thought, it was done way too late.

At the Sands exhibition center IBM put on shows every half hour, demonstrating VoiceType for Windows. They drew large crowds. But IBM never demonstrated VoiceType features built into OS/2 Warp 4. Nor did they openly discuss OS/2 Warp, despite its extended capabilities and cost benefit over the Windows version.

When I visited the Internet Exhibition area, I asked vendors if their Java software would work in an OS/2 environment. I was told that they didn't think so, nor had they tested it. They were not even aware that Java was built into the kernel of OS/2!

IBM sponsored the press area, where about forty workstations were

used by members of the press to write up stories, surf the Web, check mail, and so on. All used OS/2 Warp 4. From the comments I overheard, the journalists were impressed that the operating system was not crashing all the time like their Windows counterpart often did. Yet, if you went to IBM's own press area for information, all their ThinkPads were loaded with Windows!

As for being "partnered" with various companies and displaying their wares, IBM's exhibition area didn't quite measure up. According to one piece of COMDEX literature, there were over two hundred Microsoft Partners in its Pavilion. Amazingly, IBM was one of those "partners." I can't find the listing that describes the IBM exhibit area but I doubt they had more than forty partners. This included three or four stations that displayed ThinkPads and four booths that dealt with support or soft services, such as the Education division and BESTeam.

IBM could have done much better at COMDEX. IBM should have spoken with various vendors ahead of time, to make arrangements to spotlight OS/2 in conjunction with those firms' products.

IBM could have demonstrated OS/2 Warp 4 with the same zest as they gave to VoiceType for Windows. They could have informed listeners that you could get VoiceType *and* a full 32 bit operating system for less than \$200 (as compared to purchasing VoiceType for Windows at \$695, plus the operating system). If they sold it on the spot, IBM would have made a *ton* of same day sales! But alas, this was not the case.

Should those ThinkPads have been loaded with a flavor of Windows? Probably not. Even aside from Lotus' new version of OS/2 Smart Suite, Smart Suite '96 would work in a WinOS2 window. Does it really make sense to purchase your operating system from your competitor? I don't think so.

IBM really could have helped its cause if they helped to pick up the exhibition cost for some of the numerous software developers that

write for OS/2. (Indelible Blue's catalog is chock full of different OS/2 applications.) If they did so at a major trade show, it would give them exposure and reinforce the impression that Warp is a viable operating system.

The teleseminar

A few days ago, IBM put on a teleseminar to discuss the future of OS/2. While I was there, I spoke with several of the attendees. Some bemoaned the fact that they could not get an MWAVE sound card working in their IBM ThinkPad; when they spoke to IBM tech support about it, they found that they were told that there are no drivers written for the product! Great going IBM—installing a product in your own machine with no support for it in your own operating system!

Then there was the IT director who said that, while their shop was primarily OS/2, they would probably be forced to switch to Windows 95 or Windows NT in the near future. When asked why, he responded that it was being driven at the user level. Users wanted software that they were familiar with; since Microsoft was their software at home, they wanted to use it at the office as well. A move to Windows would also help on his support costs since there were more products out there in the Microsoft world and his training costs would be lower.

After the teleseminar presentation and during the Q&A session, the IBM representative spoke about the new "100 percent Java initiative" that Sun, IBM, Netscape and other vendors have started. The intent is that Java applications being written should be "pure," meaning no extensions are added to the code to make them specific to any one operating system or viewer.

Breaking the paradigm

This month, POSSI will hold a conference entitled "The OS/2 Marketplace: Getting Down to Business." Its focus is on the business aspects of marketing software to OS/2 users: how to make your OS/2-based busi-

ness a success. Some consider it a wake up call to IBM to stop dropping the ball in its marketing of OS/2. Given the drive I have observed on the part of the conference leadership, I have no doubts that it will be successful.

But based what I observed during COMDEX and at the recent teleseminar, IBM has to decide to break the paradigm that it is using. IBM has emphasized going after the business marketplace and the small home office place, leaving the consumer market to Microsoft. Yet if you think about it, this decision makes very little sense.

Go into any computer store and look at what's stocked on the shelf. Whether it's in games or business applications, the software packages you see are all designed for Microsoft's operating systems. Even with Microsoft continually stating that Windows 95 will be dropped in two years, support is still there. From where do you think most businesses purchase their software?

Small and home businesses have a hard time locating OS/2 specific programs that meet their needs and harder still, obtaining them from a local dealer! Even when there is a OS/2 version of a program, it is generally released after the Windows version is put out. In fact it is often priced higher than its counterpart.

In December, I called Lotus about ordering the new SmartSuite for OS/2. At the time, you could see ads throughout the valley for the Windows suite for \$149. I was told that the OS/2 package's price would be \$249! Please... with pricing like this, who would purchase it?

The fact that IBM and others even started the 100% Java initia-

tive, when you think about it, tells you that these companies are worried! They have good reason. With most applications and operating systems being used in the market being Microsoft related, Active X extensions will further drive the market in their corner. After all, who wants to write applications for a diminishing marketplace?

IBM has to recognize that their paradigm is incorrectly focused. In today's marketplace, you just can't say, "We will only go after the large business accounts." As shown by the shift taking place in the IT director's shop, the environment is user- or client-driven.

What does this mean, realistically? IBM *has to* get software drivers written for the popular hardware devices, even if it means writing the drivers themselves. A case in point is Creative Labs, which is dropping support for OS/2 with its newer sound cards.

IBM should take a page from the Microsoft manual, and donate the software to various schools so that people will have the opportunity to use it. Sponsor classes at local community colleges about using OS/2. Glendale Community College has a ton of computer classes, but none on Windows NT as yet. Beat them to the punch. Show how good a multitasking system OS/2 is, and how well it will work with existing Windows 3.1 and DOS programs. If the community college can give classes that lead up to a Novell Netware certification, why not sponsor classes to prepare people to become OS/2 Warp Server Engineers?

IBM needs to make sure that hardware in ThinkPads or its other computer systems have drivers for

OS/2 Warp 4. Sponsor public workshops on the topic. Better yet, purchase rack space in large computer stores and place OS/2 software on them! I used to be able to go into Computer City and see at least a few OS/2 packages. No longer. These days, I have to special order through a local dealer. This is definitely not purchaser friendly.

Microsoft has multiple seminars on how to use and sell their products. Training can be found nearly anywhere in the Phoenix area. I know that IBM has seminars regarding new products, but really can't remember any sales seminars in the area. I'm sure IBM can do these things just as well, if not better. All it takes is some determination and focus on IBM's part.

The OS/2 Marketplace conference is a great first step, provided that high ranking IBM officials attend and learn that their current business model needs to be changed to take into account the consumer market. They need to learn that all sections of IBM should work towards the same goal, not "What will best help *my* division?" (I have heard that is why IBM's antivirus wasn't packed with OS/2 Warp 4; that division wanted full price for the product rather than include the product and make money in upgrade fees!)

Can this be done? I would like to think so. More importantly, I hope so. Its rare for a company to completely give up a portion of a marketplace without a fight. OS/2 can survive and come out stronger if IBM recognizes all these things and gets its corporate act together. ☺

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the president's corner **Growing pains**

by Lee Baldwin

What is the myth, what is the reality? This may be the last time that I write to you, the faithful few, who have made up the Phoenix OS/2 Society for these last three years. Not because I am going away, nor because you are leaving. Instead, it's because the very nature of our organization is at a cusp.

This first weekend in February, I delivered more than 10,000 copies of *extended attributes* to Alex's Mailing House, giving us a total mailing of more than 10,500 in February. In that February issue is a full page ad for the conference, "The OS/2 Marketplace: Getting down to business." This magazine was a small circulation newsletter not so long ago!

POSSI is at a crisis point. At the last board meeting, the discussion was not, "What will we do if we fail?" but "How can we cope with success?" We have good reasons to be a little fearful of success.

If, after mailing out 10,000 copies, we have just a few responses, what happens? We get forty or fifty new members. Nobody works much harder, and the new members are easily accommodated in the current "Fold, Spindle, and Mutilate" (FSM) process that gets the mailings out once a month.

On the other hand, what happens if this mailing yields the normal expected return of 2% (204)? Bill Schindler might be a little over-

whelmed by trying to enter these additional people into the Society's database in March, during the period surrounding the OS/2 Marketplace conference. Mike Briggs could still manage to get three boxes of magazines into his car to bring up to the FSM meeting. And we would spend a little more time labeling the magazines instead of partying. The *extended attributes* staff might contemplate the economics of buying the rest of the *OS/2 Magazine* subscriber mailing list and doing it again.

Now, let's have a look at the fear! After all, this is a very hot mailing list. These are people who paid for an OS/2 publication for which there is currently no replacement, except for our offer. What happens if we have new membership signups at the rate of 20% (2040), 40% (4080), or (in our dreams—nightmares?) 60%? If our mailbox receives an average of 50 memberships a day (1,500 a month) or 150 a day (4,500 a month) our volunteer staff will become overwhelmed. This would affect such things as treasurer Stan's monthly deposit to the bank; it would need to become weekly or daily. Certainly the data entry for all of the new members would be a major task. For that matter, just keeping up with "change of address" forms could become a task to be reckoned with.

We used to have an annual bump in renewals based upon the initial memberships; the February, March, and April bump would be massive in comparison. In this case, the *extended attributes* staff almost certainly would buy the other portion of the mailing list and do it again.

extended attributes could quickly go from a superb local user group magazine to a nationally distributed periodical with almost the same distribution level as *OS/2 Magazine*. Certainly, the very nature of how we put out *extended attributes* would change.

Concurrent with all of this potential with *extended attributes*, we have the OS/2 Marketplace conference in March. So far, we have a place to do it, presenters to talk, and paying participants. I think we have a conference!

Is this the First Annual? It could be! If this conference goes off in a big way would, we consider more than one per year?

Here is where I get to address "What is myth; what is the reality?" When I went to the meetings of the Association of PC User Groups (APCUG) during COMDEX last November, I carried the attitude that Phoenix has the "pre-eminent OS/2 user group in the United States." Perhaps, at the time, that was my myth. By the end of March, it is likely to be a reality. ☺

Swap until you drop

by Dave Zechmann, dzechmann@worldnet.att.net

Do you have Sundays free? Would you like to enlighten Phoenix about OS/2?

The Phoenix OS/2 Society Inc (POSSI) is looking into setting up a booth to represent our group at an upcoming computer swap meet. Come share your OS/2 experiences, and answer any questions that the "non-Warped" might have about OS/2. Or tell people some of your favorite things about POSSI.

We're considering two upcoming swap meets. The first one (which is

the same day as the OS/2 Marketplace) is Sunday, March 16th at Electronic Materials & Computers. That's on the northwest corner of Thomas and 31st Ave. in the parking lot from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m. This is currently the largest gathering of computer related vendors in the valley.

The other swap meet will be held on the following Sunday, March 23rd, in the Shrine Auditorium at 552 N. 40th St. (just north of Van Buren). Its hours are from 10:00am till 5:00pm. If you really get into

pitching the group and decide to make a day of it, both locations also have food and soft drinks.

We would like to get an idea of how many members of POSSI are interested. If you have any questions, or to give your "thumbs up" to join in on this project, please contact me at dzechmann@worldnet.att.net with the date and time that you can help. Hope to see you there! ☺

March meeting Shades of blue

When you think of OS/2 application sales, one company comes to mind. Indelible Blue, Inc. began as a kitchen-top business, selling OS/2 applications via mail-order. Only a few years later, Indelible Blue is a multimillion dollar company with forty employees.

Since the next Phoenix OS/2 Society general meeting immediately follows the OS/2 Marketplace conference, it seemed appropriate to ask the Indelible Blue founders, Buck Bohac and Katy Ansardi, to speak to us about the state of the OS/2 marketplace. Alas, Einstein, the company mascot, won't be able to attend.

About Indelible Blue

Even if you order software from Indelible Blue, you might not be aware of the company's history.

Like many start-up businesses, Indelible Blue is a company created out of necessity. Although it was originally formed in 1987 by Buck Bohac and Katherine Ansardi, the company was formally established as a software reseller specializing in OS/2 applications in January of 1993.

Buck became interested in OS/2 while pursuing a PhD in physical chemistry at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His research required extensive use of all types of computers ranging from IBM XT's to CRAY supercomputers. DOS and Windows were inadequate for his memory, connectivity, and multi-tasking requirements. When IBM introduced OS/2 version 2.0, Buck considered it the solution for his desktop computers.

Although OS/2 worked well with his existing applications, it was extremely difficult to locate programs written specifically for OS/2, to take full advantage of its powerful capabilities. Buck noticed many similar complaints from other OS/2 users on CompuServe, Prodigy, and the Internet, and formulated an idea for starting a business that specialized in OS/2 products.

In business, timing is everything. Indelible Blue's inception occurred shortly prior to the release of OS/2 v2.1. Word about the new company

quickly spread through IBM and the OS/2 community via online services. The entire first two printings of the catalog were sent out to fill requests before any print advertisement appeared. A mail order company specializing in OS/2 applications was exactly what dedicated OS/2 users had been waiting for!

In addition to providing a regular catalog featuring hundreds of OS/2 applications, hardware systems, and peripherals, Indelible Blue publishes a newsletter that includes product announcements and information about how companies are putting OS/2 to use. Their Web site (www.indelible-blue.com/ib) has an online version of the catalog with secure ordering. The company handles product fulfillment for over two hundred OS/2 software developers and continually investigates and evaluates new OS/2 applications in an effort to provide its customers with the latest in OS/2 technology. Indelible Blue also preinstalls software applications on its own line of desktop and laptop computers upon customer request.

Indelible Blue has achieved annual growth in excess of 200%. In 1995 and 1996, Indelible Blue was ranked 5th and 2nd respectively in the "Triangle Fast 50," an annual awards program coordinated by KPMG Peat Marwick, the Council for Entrepreneurial Development, and Triangle Business Journal that recognizes the fastest growing companies in the Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill, North Carolina area. Also, in 1995 and 1996, Indelible Blue was ranked fourth and second respectively in the "North Carolina Tech Fast 50" awards program sponsored by the Association of Technology Business Councils and the Council for Entrepreneurial Development in recognition of the fastest growing technology businesses in North Carolina. In 1996, Indelible Blue was ranked 29th in the annual survey compiled by Tech News Inc., of the nation's 500 fastest growing privately held technology companies.

Different meeting site!

Last year, John W Thompson—then the general manager in charge of OS/2 at IBM's Personal Software Products division—spoke to the user group. During his presentation, he invited himself back, saying he'd return in a year "so you all can tell me how I've done." John W Thompson was promoted a few months ago (he's now in charge of IBM marketing for the United States) and his replacement is Mike Lawrie.

Unfortunately, due to the nature of scheduling problems during a "changing of the guard," Mike Lawrie couldn't make the meeting.

In the meantime, we had arranged to use the hotel room at the Scottsdale Holiday Inn where the OS/2 Marketplace conference will have just wrapped up. After all, we have the hotel for the whole day. Plus, we'll have several OS/2 software vendors still in town, after the conference, giving us a unique opportunity to talk with a lot of people concurrently.

As a result, note that the March general meeting will be at a *different location and a different date*. Buck and Katy will be speaking at 7:00pm on Sunday night, March 16, at the Holiday Inn in Old Town Scottsdale. The Holiday Inn is on Indian School Road, just east of Scottsdale Road; it backs up to the park next to the Scottsdale Center for the Arts. (You've probably walked by it a hundred times.) ☺

General meeting

what

▲ Indelible Blue, Inc

where

▲ Holiday Inn
7353 E Indian School
Scottsdale, AZ

when

▲ Sunday, March 16, 1997
▲ 6:30pm: Q & A session
▲ 7:00pm: Regular meeting

history Coming events

This is a list of events scheduled by the Phoenix OS/2 Society. Unless otherwise noted, active members may attend any scheduled event for free.

Meeting notes

For the latest updates on the Society's event calendar, check the Web site at <http://www.possi.org>.

For meeting information and other queries, call the Phoenix OS/2 Society's voice mail at 602-949-4341.

If you have suggestions, ideas, or comments on the content of general meetings, contact the Society's Program Chair, Esther Schindler, at the general meetings or send email to esther@primenet.com.

March						
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March 1997

4 net.sig (Internet SIG). HTML explorations. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

4 Developer's SIG. Java. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

5 Magazine submission deadline for April issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

11 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinator Rosey Rosenwald. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

11 OS/2 Marketplace conference preparation meeting. Preparation of registration materials. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm (or until finished). Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

14 Conference; The OS/2 Marketplace: Getting down to business. Co-sponsored by the Phoenix OS/2 Society and Indelible Blue, Inc. Location: Old Town Holiday Inn, Scottsdale. Conference runs March 14-16.

16 General meeting. Indelible Blue, Inc. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Old Town Holiday Inn, Scottsdale.

22 Board meeting and magazine prep. Meeting is 10:00am to 1:00pm. Eat a brunch, learn about the inner workings of the Society, and help get extended attributes ready to mail. Location: Bill and Esther Schindler.

April 1997

1 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

1 LAN SIG. Cabling. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Coordinator Elliot Abramowitz. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

5 Magazine article submission deadline for May issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

8 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. REXX lessons. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinator Rosey Rosenwald. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

8 General meeting. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

26 Board meeting and magazine prep.

May 1997

6 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

6 Developer's SIG. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

13 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinator Rosey Rosenwald. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

13 General meeting. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

24 Board meeting and magazine prep.

June 1997

4 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

4 LAN SIG. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Coordinator Elliot Abramowitz. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

11 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 3:30pm to 5:30pm. Coordinator Rosey Rosenwald. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

11 General meeting. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

22 Board meeting and magazine prep.

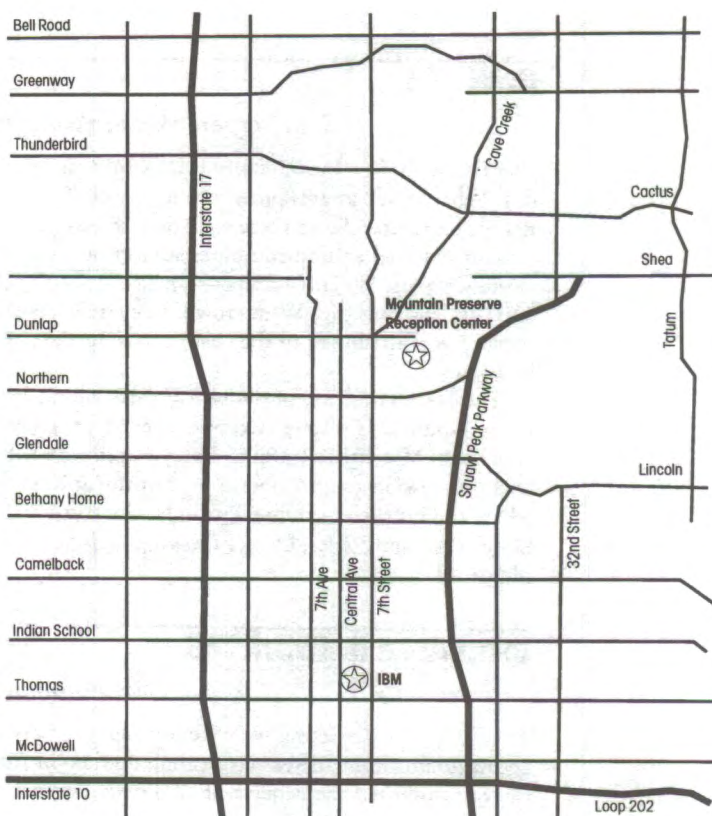
Meeting locations

General meetings are held at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

From the Black Canyon, exit at Dunlap and head east. From the Squaw Peak, exit at Northern. Go west to 12th Street, turn right and go north to Dunlap, turn right, and it's two blocks up on the right.

The "How OS/2 Works General Interest Group" now meets at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center on the afternoon of the general meeting.

The Internet SIG, Developer's SIG, and LAN SIG all meet at Knowledge Development Center, 2999 N 44th St, Suite 400. (It's not yet shown on the map.) That's just north of Thomas, in the building with the green dome. Plenty of free parking space is available in the garage behind the building. ☺



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Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc. 5515 N 7th St, Ste 5-133. Phoenix, AZ 85014-2585. USA

If the mailing label on the back cover says "sample," then this may be the only copy of extended attributes that you will ever receive. If you want to keep getting the magazine (and receive all the other benefits of membership), you must join! A 12 month membership in the US is only \$30. (See the form for membership pricing in other areas.) Copy or cut out the application form, fill it in, and mail it with the membership fee to the Society's address.

HOW GIG

Stan Kroppen, skroppen@ibm.net

The HOW GIG—Introductory REXX met on Tuesday, February 11 at 3:30pm at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center. Since there were only three of us, discussion centered around computer subjects and other worldly events. We missed all our friends, especially the Sun City and Sun City West crowd. Hopefully, the low turnout was attributed to the change in time, date, and location.

The March meeting of the HOW GIG will be held at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center on Tuesday afternoon, March 11, 3:30pm. Rosey Rosenwald will lead a discussion about "some of my favorite utilities and where to find them," and will include a look at DragText, FontFolder, Object Desktop and Partition Magic. ☺

Local Area Network SIG

Elliot Abramowitz

At our February meeting we were fortunate to have Laura Adams from IBM's certification division in Austin. She discussed the benefits of IBM's professional certification programs.

Ms Adams discussed several aspects of certification. What does the certification program provide to the customer? What topics are offered that lead to certification? Who should be certified? What benefits results from it, and what is the payback?

IBM provides a structured educational road map to help you achieve a specific skill set, such as OS/2 Engineer. That's just one of 47 certification topics that can be obtained through IBM's program. The program actually started with three certification topics in 1993; it has grown tremendously since then. IBM expects to add another 25 topics to the certification list this year alone, including (naturally) the Internet.

Current topics include:

- Database and transaction processing: such as IBM Certified DB2 Database Administrator.
- Networking hardware: includes physical applications, such as IBM Certified Specialist.
- Ethernet networking software: IBM Warp Server Engineer is in this category.
- Operating systems: Among other topics, this category includes the one we are all interested in, IBM Certified OS/2 Engineer.

Other topics include object technology, systems hardware, Lotus, and PC servers. That's enough to keep everyone in the user group busy!

IBM believes that Information Technology (IT) professionals who implement, support, or design and develop IBM applications should become certified. That includes consultants, IBM Business Partners, support technicians, and system administrators.

Reasons for certification may vary, depending on how you approach the subject. From a personal aspect, certification can provide you with higher salaries (11.7% higher, on average), industry recognition, and better job qualification. From your company's point of view, certification yields lower support costs, increased productivity, and a good return on training investment. (You are more likely to stay awake in a class when you know you'll be tested on the material.) For resellers, certification can increase your productivity and helps you be competitive in your area. It has even increased market share!

IBM ties some of its business partner programs to certification. For instance, IBM's BESTeam program bases participation levels on the training and certification programs you or your firm have completed.

As of January, 15,266 individuals had completed one or more of the programs, and received certification in a topic. The program currently has over 19,000 candidates in process. Impressive numbers!

Ms Adams went over the road map for the OS/2 Engineer Warp 4. She pointed out that testing is now more focused, allowing someone to obtain their certification in three tests (the old system required four). She also brought along two copies of a new 1,100-page Certification handbook which covers OS/2 Warp 4, which were distributed as door prizes.

Ms Adams emphasized two key concepts. Certification is becoming a necessity within the IT field, and IBM has a comprehensive and expanding program to meet it.

In April, we hope to bring in a network cable installer to discuss the differences between various cables and attachment that you can use on a network. Keep a watch on the POSSI Web site for corrections to our schedule, and any announcements.

Could you please send me an email at elliota@indirect.com? I want to learn if local area networks is a topic of interest to you, and I'd like to get a ball park figure of how many in our user group either work with LANs or are interested in them. ☺

Internet SIG

Mike Briggs, mike@possi.org

We held our first meeting at the Knowledge Development Center (KDC) on February 4th. Everyone got in and seemed to be able to find the new location without too many problems. The facility is outstanding, and the audio/visual equipment is top notch. Walt Householder of the KDC made us feel right at home, and helped me get things set up. (And did I mention the chocolate chip cookies?)

We looked over FTPit, a nice FTP client for OS/2.

Next month's meeting will be on Tuesday, March 4. We will meet at the KDC at an earlier time: from 6pm to 8pm. That will get us out earlier, and be kinder to the KDC folks who have to hang around while we're there.

Letters Problems with BESTeam

Letters to the editor should be sent to editor@possi.org, or mailed to:

Editor, extended attributes
Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc
5515 N 7th St, Ste 5-133
Phoenix, AZ 85014-2585

We reserve the right to edit all letters for content, readability, and length.

I beg to disagree with [Esther Schindler] regarding BESTeam and the marketing "success" of Warp 4. In my humble opinion, IBM has made a dismal failure of BESTeam. I joined BESTeam over a year ago, but after I received my initial sign-up packet, I got nothing else except an occasional fax. No betas of Merlin (OS/2 Warp 4), and no copies of OS/2 Warp 4 of any flavor when it shipped.

With regard to supporting consumers who purchased OS/2, I think IBM has dropped the ball very badly here, too. I own two different versions of OS/2 (OS/2 2.1 and OS/2 Warp), purchased separately and with my own nickel. I have a ThinkPad 701 purchased from IBM which came with Windows and another copy of OS/2 Warp pre-installed, and I have *never* been offered upgrade pricing on any OS from IBM. I'd love to try out OS/2 Warp 4 on my new ThinkPad 365XD, but it didn't come as an option and I can't get it unless I pay full retail. Given IBM's history of supporting me as a consumer and me as a member of BESTeam, I haven't chosen to do so.

Instead, I'm running Windows 95 on that laptop and wishing I had OS/2 Warp to run on it.

IBM has a superior product and the techies know it. But the market ignores it because of the failure of marketing. IBM may own the OS market for automatic teller machines, but I can't see that I can use the word "success" in the same sentence as "IBM marketing of OS/2." I wish I could.

Angus Scott-Fleming

Pressure to shift

As a former OS/2 Magazine subscriber I got a copy of *extended attributes*. Thanks, it looks very, very good.

However, it arrived at an odd time for me. I have been searching for an OS/2 user group in my area (818 area code: San Fernando Valley, LA) and have found *nothing*. Even worse, I have been using OS/2 ever since 2.1 came out and love it, but I feel driven by IBM, among others, to shift to Windows NT.

I am starting to work extensively with Lotus Notes 4.5. Many really great features only work on the Windows 95/NT platforms. Lotusphere ran a virtual web page during the big Notes convention, which required you to use Netscape 3 or IE. Of course, OS/2 users only go as far as

Netscape 2.02, so much of the convention was off limits.

And then there is the odd question of two other recently orphaned IBM products: NetRexx and Visual Age for Basic (VAB). VAB doesn't ever appear in Visual Age advertising. If IBM was going to dump it for Java, why ever did I waste my time with the VAB beta? Mind you, VAB also has (had) cross-platform dreams: OS/2, Windows 95, Windows NT, and Mac System 7.

But I feel lucky; I never did anything more than download the NetRexx beta. No time was wasted on it.

So, I feel I'm being driven to Windows NT and only lethargy has kept me from wandering off the ranch. That and being unsure how I am going to turn my two gigabyte HPFS drive into an NTFS drive without losing all that data.

Bill Vanderbok

[Orphaned? NetRexx was released as IBM Employee Written Software (EWS). I recently received a note from Mike Cowlshaw, creator of both Rexx and NetRexx, saying that his book on NetRexx is now in print. — Editor]

.sigs (cont)

We will have OS/2 Warp 4 loaded on a Pentium 166 and should have a fast connection to the Internet. This will be a big step up from the laptop and 14.4 connection! Bill Young's demonstration of HTMLStudio was such a hit at the February general meeting, that Duane Pruett will give us another closer look at the program next meeting.

Also, I have set up a listserv for POSSI members. If you subscribe to the list, all you have to do is send email to members@possi.org, and everyone on the list gets a message. We have been using it for "late breaking news" as well as information about Society discount programs, etc. If you aren't signed up but would like to be, send an email to mike@possi.org saying so.

Developer's SIG

Lyle Wilson

If you are interested in VisualAge and you missed the VisualAge Forum that was held on February 11th, you missed a great introduction to VisualAge from an enterprise view. They explained the "Why this is important to

a company" view of VisualAge. On the technical side, I got two things from the forum:

With SmallTalk version 4, IBM added HTML integration, so you can develop the GUI and database (or whatever connectivity), and the product will generate the client-side HTML to access it, via a browser and the server side CGI access. With SmallTalk's quick development time, easy GUI building and connection, and the breadth of the parts available, this is a serious tool for those who need quick, flexible, and dependable systems.

The VisualAge for Java beta will be available in the next few weeks, with the GA version out in July. Java is a big deal to OS/2. Go Java!

The next developer SIG meeting will be held at the Knowledge Development Center on March 4th from 7:00pm—9:00pm. With the change in SIG location and the amount of material, I don't have the meeting finalized. I will have the final info on the Developer SIG's home page by February 21. I'm planning to do either VisualAge SmallTalk/Java, GNU C/C++ compiler, or EPM programming. Please send me mail if you have a preference.

May I be of assistance?

by Marilyn Pizzo

Now that we have completed our overview of OS/2 Warp 4, it's time to get down to business and see what lies underneath that pretty blue desktop—or as I call it, the under-view.

I usually like to experiment and to try things (in a conservative manner). Since I had never really browsed in the Assistance Center, as of yet, I thought it might be a good place to begin. I was curious just what I could find there and how extensive the information is. I am not a big fan of on-line help, but it does seem to be the way of the future. (After all, not printing manuals does save trees.)

You can access the Assistance Center from two locations on the Workplace Shell desktop. The obvious one is the large icon on the main part of the desktop (you can't miss it). Not quite as obvious is a button on the WarpCenter, just to the left of the clock.

After double clicking on the large Assistance Center icon on the Desktop, I selected Information to look at first. Double click on Information. There are five categories to choose from so let's start at the top with Online Information Overview. Single click on the plus (+) button; three options appear: Glossary, OS/2 Warp System Overview, and Using Online Information.

The glossary

Upon double clicking on Glossary you will see instructions on how to use the list and the glossary list itself. As you scroll through the glossary you will see how extensive it is. I'm sure there is probably something missing, but to me it looks like everything is covered.

Choose a couple of topics and double click on them. When you do, the definition shows on the right hand portion of the screen. The glossary seems to be where to go when you need a concise definition. It would be a great starting point when you hear terms being tossed about in a POSSI meeting but don't have a clue what people are talking about.

The next option is OS/2 Warp Overview. When you double click on it, you are taken into a **Welcome to the World of OS/2 Warp 4** screen. Select the Forward button, and you are taken through several screens that give you a brief but enlightening overview of OS/2 Warp 4—just enough to scratch the surface and make you dangerous! This feature might be good to give a brief overview of what OS/2 Warp 4 has to offer. By single clicking the plus sign, you see a list of topics; you can go directly to an individual topic instead of wading through the entire Welcome area.

Using online information

The third section is **Using Online Information**. Again, you can double click and progress through a series of screens filled with brief but good information, or you can single click on the plus and see a listing of the topics discussed. If you notice, whenever you click on a plus the listing is expanded, and the sign itself changes to a minus (-). Click on the minus sign to see what happens.

The next topic we find is ReadMe. Click on the plus sign to bring up the complete listing of Readme documents included in OS/2 Warp 4. It is nice to have access to all these Readme files in one central location.

What is a Readme file? Usually, a Readme file contains last minute information that might be of interest before installing software. Sometimes it contains hints to solve problems that were found in testing, but didn't make the manual's publication deadline. It is always advisable to at least look at the Readme file of any software before using it. Double click some of the Readme choices. At the top of the window you will notice the path of the particular Readme file you have accessed.

As we proceed through the listings in the Information section, we will find Reference and Commands. The information here is a little more technical. It by no means takes the place of a reference manual. Although the information on REXX is informative, I would not use it as

my main source to learn REXX programming. The OS/2 Warp Command Reference defines a wide variety of OS/2 commands in simple terminology. You can search for definitions by task category or, if you know the command name, by name. This section is very versatile; it can accommodate those of us who know what we want to look up but aren't quite sure what the proper terminology is, as well as those of us who may know the name of an OS/2 command but want to know what it means. If you are interested in TCP/IP commands, you can also search by task category as well as the command name itself.

I think I'm beginning to like the online help provided with OS/2 Warp 4. (Did I actually say that?) The next area in the Information section is titled **Tasks**. I explored the very first item on the list of Tasks: OS/2 Warp Desktop Guide. This is an excellent section to browse for information on the basic workings of the operating system. Simple how-to steps and cross-references make it easy to get basic help on just about any topic. The contents listing is written in plain English topics, not technical jargon. There's even a section on VoiceType.

Last, but not least, under Information is the Help Index. The contents are arranged alphabetically so you can scroll through the entire list or jump directly to the appropriate letter of the alphabet you need. Depending on the item selected, you'll find a definition or explanation of what the item is, and step-by-step directions to get to the area.

I certainly underestimated the online information in OS/2 Warp 4. Don't get me wrong, I'm still not a big fan of online help but the Information folder in the Assistance Center definitely is worth a look-see.

Warp Guide

Next I decided to take a peek at the Warp Guide folder to see what goodies might be there. Just because I don't have the Warp Guide pop-up windows activated on my system doesn't mean it's worthless.

EmTec Network Suite

The EmTec Network Suite is a 32 bit multithreaded PM based internet suite featuring:

1. Usenet Newsreader

Which Features Include:

- context sensitive help
- keyword searches
- multiple connections with selected news server
- multiple sort / message view options available
- offline posting
- offline reading
- selective and mass decoding of binary news articles
- sending of email via smtp
- support for message threading
- support for multiple servers

2. FTP Client

Which Features Include:

- drag and drop support
- firewall support
- mark and download files from different directories
- multiple connections to several servers at the same time
- multiple connections to the same server
- multiple file selection
- resume aborted downloads
- save server feature

3. Gopher Client

Which Features Include:

- add / save servers
- cascading windows and/or tree viewing
- receive ASCII and binary files from any gopher server

Usenet Newsreader - \$30
FTP client - \$30
Gopher Client - \$25
Purchase Any 2 - 10% OFF
OR
Purchase ALL 3 for Only \$68

Also includes a PM based full featured address book that integrates into the newsreader and a PM based ping application for pinging hosts.

All components are WPS aware and allow customization of fonts and color schemes via font and color palattes.

For more information or to purchase these fine products, contact BMT Micro, Inc. at 800/414-4268

((910) 791-7052 outside North America). or Fax us at: (910) 350-2937.

<http://www.bmtmicro.com> Or <ftp.bmtmicro.com/bmtmicro> for demos.

BMT Micro, 5019 Carolina Beach Road Suite 202, Wilmington, NC 28412

Internet Solutions from **BMT Micro, Inc.**

PMMail 1.9

PMMail is a native OS/2, 32-bit, Presentation Manager (PM) internet e-mail client. It has been designed for maximum configurability and ease of use!

PMMail supports POP and SMTP servers. In addition, **PMMail is a MIME compliant mail client.** This means that attachments as well as international character sets are handled transparently.

Some highlights of PMMail are: multiple account support, nestable folders, (semi-) transparent PGP support, advanced filtering using SouthSoft's ISCL (Internet Content Search Language), MIME compliancy, user customization through rexx exits, a spellchecker, and many others. For a full of features, see the Feature List.

To it's merit, **PMMail also includes an incredibly powerful address book.** Allowing the creation of multiple address books, the address book allows you to classify your contacts instead of dropping them all into one massive list. In addition users can be copied (actually shadowed) into multiple address books if that suits your needs. **New for version 1.9 is the inclusion of address groups.** These allow you to maintain low overhead collections of addresses for use as mailing lists. Using this technology, coupled with some new filter options specific to addressing, **PMMail 1.9 can completely automate a quasi-listserv.** \$40 single copy / Qty discounts available!

The Warp Guide will give a brief explanation about the area you selected, depending on your level of expertise. Try double clicking the icons here in the Warp Guide folder. (Remember, you can't hurt OS/2 Warp 4 so go ahead and explore.) If you choose to have the Warp Guide assist you as you do things with your computer, you need to go to the **User Check-In for Warp Guide** to establish your level of expertise. That way, the Warp Guide knows how to respond to you as you experiment with the desktop, etc.

The Assistance Center folder has access to the OS/2 Warp Tutorial. The tutorial is set up like a slide show, demonstrating different techniques and allowing you to practice each if you wish. You can select different topics to learn about, and progress at your own rate. If you are new to OS/2, this is a great area in which to spend some time. The tutorial points out some things common to other operating systems; those suggestions might be helpful in making the transition to OS/2 and becoming more comfortable with the capabilities of a computer.

I'm sure we have all heard comments that OS/2 isn't user friendly or that it is hard to learn. With the tutorial, you get a very excellent introduction into actually doing stuff. When you have something new (especially if you paid money for it), you want to be able to do something with it, preferably what it was designed to do. This is true with everything, not just computers or operating systems.

Since we have been provided with such a good source of instruction as the Assistance Center, we should all take a few minutes just to browse through what is there. I admit, we may not need to know how to open and close a window and some may chuckle that a basic task such as that has its own screen in the tutorial, but remember, OS/2 Warp is an operating system. If someone has never used a computer before, they need to know these things. It is very smart to have them included in the "Help"

area. Now, when someone says OS/2 is hard to learn you can show them how easy it is, and that OS/2 Warp 4 is for everyone. It is not just for advanced users or "power users." You can show the skeptical how and where to get online assistance.

Losing the elephant

I was forwarded a tip a while back that you may find interesting. Someone wanted to know how to get rid of the cute little elephant at the very beginning of the completed installation.

The answer that accompanied the question gave the following instructions:

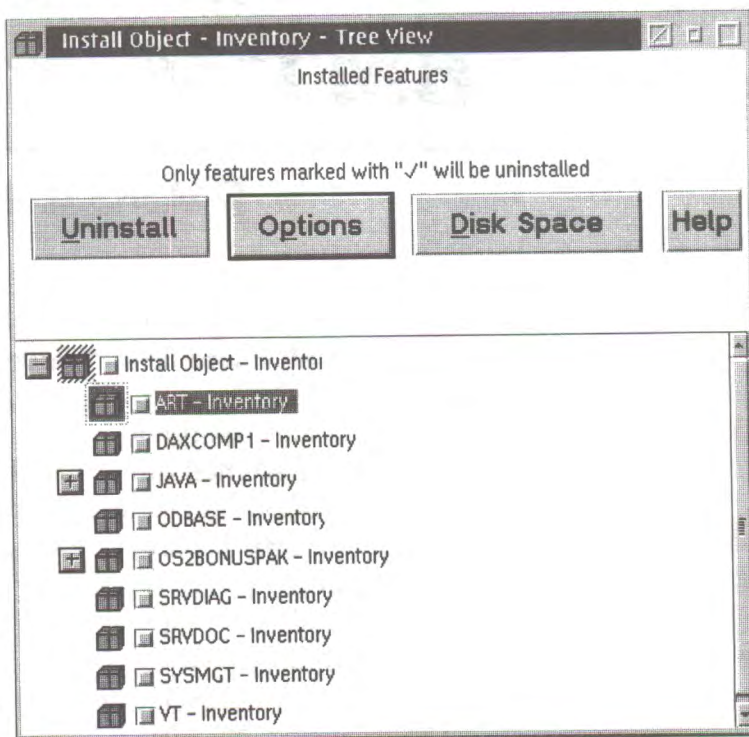
- Using the Drives object, locate and double-click on the file **OS2\Install\Installed Features\Install Object—Inventory** to open it.
- Check **ART** and click the **Uninstall** button.

Apparently someone had just loaded OS/2 Warp 4 and didn't like the adorable dancing elephant. Actually, I thought he was quite cute. It seems to me though that there is a much

easier way to say bye-bye to the beloved pachyderm... register your copy of OS/2 Warp 4 online. Or, if memory serves me correctly, there was an option to not have the registration screen come up again. You make your choice as to what to do there.

Hopefully you now have a better understanding of where you find assistance online. This feature is invaluable as we become more familiar with the terms and functions of OS/2 Warp 4 and its capabilities. I hope you agree that the Assistance Center silences some of the rumors and stray comments about how hard OS/2 is to use. I am not implying that the Assistance Center will answer every question, but it sure gives you a good base to build on.

As a side note: I would like to say that I appreciate everyone's comments each month regarding the "Building Blocks" series. If anyone has a question to ask or tip to share, please pass them to me. ☺



review

Review of Getting to Know OS/2 Warp 4

by Ray Sigafos

If you are like me, you don't read computer manuals, at least not front to back like a new Tom Clancy novel. I normally install the software, using the quick start instructions in the readme.txt file, and work with what comes up on the screen. If the software is intuitively designed, I can deduce the major features and make it work. I sometimes miss a feature that I could use, but most computer manuals are not written well enough to be really useful.

When I tried this "learn on the job" method with an operating system as complex as OS/2 Warp, I became completely lost after the first five minutes. That was three years ago. Fortunately I had help with the big concepts in the form of a POSSI Install Day. I also bought two door-stop size books, *OS/2 Warp Unleashed* and *Inside OS/2*. They were invaluable in my quest to conquer the beast of OS/2 version 3. Between the two I got most of my "how to do it" questions handled.

Now we have OS/2 Warp version 4 and the big books are yet to come (although David Moskowitz is

reported to be hard at work on his tome). What has been published is IBM's *Getting to Know OS/2 Warp 4*, by Prentice Hall PTR available at major book outlets. I got my copy online from Amazon (<http://www.amazon.com>) who purport to have 100,000 titles in their catalog.

Ordering was easy, delivery was fast.

Is *Getting to Know...* worth the \$39.95 price? As the old saying goes, "It depends."

If you are looking for a detailed analysis like *Unleashed*, wait for David Moskowitz to perform his magic. If you are looking to "get to know," this is the book for you. It was written by IBM. In olden days, this would have shipped as the manual for the operating system. It has lots of screen shots and figures that explain the major features, but not many of the details behind the details. There are pages of steps to take to accomplish a task, without expanding on the "why" of the task. As an example, the book has a section on the Bonus Pak applications explaining how they work in general terms, but nowhere is it explained how to install them. Neither does the book include instructions on how to set preferences for each of the applications.

I did pick up some tidbits here and there. For example, the section dealing with accessing the Internet includes the topic of FTP folders and explains how you can create one. They are another way to use an FTP client from the Workplace Shell. They are one of three different FTP clients built into OS/2 Warp 4. I would not call the discussion highly technical, but at least it's useful enough to get me started. Most of the rest of the networking section, covering 250 pages, was wasted on me since I am not connecting to an office LAN anytime soon.

The function of this book is to explain the major functions of the operating system, to get people up and running, and otherwise to serve as the printed manual for the software for those of us old enough to have trouble using onscreen documentation. As such, I am glad I have it in my library, but I will wait for David's tome for some of the nitty gritty stuff.

By the way, the dictionary for IBM Works does not include OS, FTP, Internet, or Workplace. ☹

press release

File your taxes online!

Parsons Technology, makers of award-winning Personal Tax Edge and State Tax Edge software, launched its online application for completing and filing a 1040 EZ form on the company's Internet web site: <http://1040online.parsonstech.com/qualifier/1040EZ.html>

1040 EZ Online provides a thorough, efficient and affordable alternative to manually filling out the 1040 EZ tax form. When users file through 1040EZ Online, they can file electronically and get their return back faster.

The web site provides a Qualifier feature to determine whether the 1040EZ form is the appropriate tax document for users. For taxpayers who don't qualify for the 1040 EZ form, Parsons offers Personal Tax Edge, Windows-based federal tax software that can be downloaded or ordered directly from the company's web site. (Parsons tests all its software in WinOS2 to ensure compatibility.)

The data entry portion of 1040 EZ Online takes users step-by-step through the document and automatically transfers answers to the 1040 EZ form. The form is then audited

for missing or inconsistent information. And, at any time, users can access IRS and program help for fast answers to their questions.

The program costs just \$9.95 to use and data encryption ensures a user's credit card number is secure. Returns can be filed electronically through Parsons. Or users can choose to have printed materials sent to them. Regardless of the filing method, a packet of information that includes printed copies of returns and additional instructions are sent. ☹

press release

DBExpert joins Sundial Systems

Sundial Systems has acquired Designer Software Inc.'s principal product line, DBExpert for OS/2.

DBExpert, available in both full- and run-time versions, is an end-user relational database product that works with several different database formats. It provides an environment for building and utilizing personal and departmental database applications using tables, queries, forms and reports—without the need for traditional programming. It can also be used to develop and deploy front-end applications for enterprise-level relational databases such as those stored in DB2. First released in 1995, DBExpert was significantly upgraded to Version 2 in 1996.

Sundial Systems is a leading publisher of OS/2 productivity applications. Historically known for its Relish and Relish Net personal and group information management products, Sundial broadened its range of offerings during the first half of 1996 by adding both the Clearlook word processor (originally from Clearlook Corporation) and the Mesa 2 spreadsheet (originally from Athena Design, Inc.) to its family of products. The addition of DBExpert

further expands that range into a full family of offerings.

Sundial Systems has already assumed marketing, distribution, and technical support responsibility for the current version of DBExpert. Existing pricing and support policies remain in effect but are now under the Sundial banner.

New email support addresses (dbexpert@sundialsystems.com and dbexpert@ibm.net) have been put in place and DBExpert has been added to Sundial's support area on CompuServe (Section 5 of OS2AVEN). All existing Designer Software customers have become Sundial Systems customers.

On-going development of future DBExpert versions will be a joint effort of both Designer Software and Sundial Systems. This will ensure feature and function continuity for the existing customer base while providing additional resources and expertise where they can best be leveraged within the product.

Later this spring, Sundial Systems will make available a new version of DBExpert "rebranded" as a Sundial product, containing several of the most-often-requested feature enhancements. That version will

replace the version currently available in the channel (2.0.2) and will be the subject of a future announcement.

Over time, Sundial Systems also plans to provide a number of integration "hooks" between DBExpert and the other members Sundial's family of OS/2 productivity applications: Relish, Mesa 2, and Clearlook. These capabilities will provide users with a number of different ways to use to use and view information normally contained within any one of the products.

"The folks at Designer Software have made great progress over the last few years in building a solid, extremely competitive offering for the end-user database market," noted Randell Flint, President of Sundial Systems Corporation. "We're looking forward to leveraging that base both within and across the Sundial product family."

For further information on DBExpert and Sundial Systems, visit the Sundial Systems web site at www.sundialsystems.com or contact Carla Hanzlik, Vice President of Sundial Systems, at 562-596-5121 or 562-596-5366. ☺

press release

OS/2 Central Developers Forum opens

Creative Systems Programming Corporation, in conjunction with Productivity Solutions, Inc., opened their newest CompuServe forum, the OS/2 Central Developers Forum. This new forum will provide support for the OS/2 developer community.

The OS/2 Central Developers Forum (GO OS2DF1) joins the OS/2

Central Forum, which opened late last year as part of the expanding OS/2 Community on CompuServe.

The OS/2 Central Developers Forum includes discussion and file download areas for the Workplace Shell, SOM, APIs (Base systems, Presentation Manager and Open32), multimedia, device drivers, and

development tools. It also includes sections for C and C++, REXX, Java and Java Beans, and other languages as well as internationalization. Other areas on this forum include Networks, Internets and Intranets, Netscape plugins, speech enabling, debugging, and developer marketing. ☺

press release

Stardock PlusPak for OS/2 Warp

Stardock Systems, Inc. has released PlusPak for OS/2, the first product of Stardock's new component software strategy. PlusPak:Themes allows OS/2 users to create, trade, and use

desktop themes. The product uses OS/2's unique object oriented features (such as the Workplace Shell) to allow users to work with themes very easily.

Creating themes on Windows95, for example, is a tedious and time consuming experience. Thanks to OS/2's object-oriented infrastructure, creating themes and applying

them is a matter of dragging and dropping. Accompanying the themes are thousands of icons that Stardock has been working on for nearly a year. All of the icons in the nearly twenty themes have been individually rendered, support up to 24-bit color at every graphics resolution and size OS/2 supports.


With its new component strategy, Stardock can now release features one at a time, allowing users to pick and choose the features they want. This means that the price of each component remains very low, and users don't pay for features they are not interested in.

Depending on the success of PlusPak: Themes, Stardock hopes to deliver further OS/2 applets for the PlusPak with similarly low prices. For example, Stardock is exploring the possibility of bringing anti-aliasing font rendering to OS/2 as well as Internet enhancements.

"This works out great for OS/2 users because now they don't pay for features they don't want. In the future, if we had PlusPak: Themes, PlusPak: Anti-Aliasing Fonts, and PlusPak: Internet Toys, users could pick which features they want and just pay for those," said Wardell. Stardock will also begin releasing additional Themes for PlusPak cus-

tomers free of charge beginning in March.

The PlusPak release also coincides with Stardock's new on-line commerce server. Users can order and download PlusPak directly from Stardock's Web site on the secure Web server. Users without access to the Internet can purchase the PlusPak from Stardock for \$29.95 (it's \$24.95 if ordered/downloaded on-line).

Stardock Systems can be reached at 313-453-0328, 800-672-2338, or via email at sales@stardock.com. The PlusPak is located on Stardock's Web site: www.stardock.com. 

Bulk purchase program

by Brad Montroy

It has been suggested that we start a Bulk Purchase program for Society members. We have done this before, with varying degrees of success, for some specific products. I have volunteered to be the liaison person to coordinate this. Ideally, this would be an on-going program where each month a product or two would be featured. Information about what products would be available each month would be posted on the POSSI Web site and emailed to all members.

We may have printed information at the meetings for those few who don't have an email address, and if known well enough in advance, published in our award winning *extended attributes* magazine.

To make this work we will have to get a sizable number of members to purchase the offered product, probably fifteen or more. It will depend on the product and will vary from month to month.



I would like to get your suggestions on products you would be interested in buying. You can e-mail me at: bmontro@aztec.asu.edu or call the Society's voice mail and leave a message. Please be sure to leave your name and phone number in case we need to contact you.


I think that this will be mostly software products, since hardware requirements vary so much from computer to computer that it would be difficult to get enough people needing the same thing. Though something like disk drives, if a lot of people want a new 2 gigabyte drive, for example, would work.

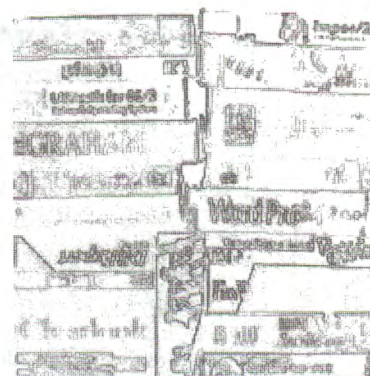
Once a product is decided upon and announced I would like to take orders and payment at the monthly meetings. There will be a cut off date, but I will try to allow a reasonable amount of time for those who don't make the meeting to get their orders in. And for those who forget their checkbooks, payments can be mailed to me. I will send in the order to the supplier and receive the bulk shipment. Then I will distribute the products at the next monthly meeting. If someone needs the product sooner, or misses the meeting, I will make arrangements to handle that.

At the present time we have an offer from BMT Micro of monthly specials for the user group. BMT Micro handles registration of shareware for over 100 vendors. They



have a CD-ROM containing all of the shareware they distribute. This is offered at a low price and quantity discounts are available. The price I have is for December 1996, so I don't know what the January 1997 price will be yet; I'll have details at the next meeting.

Also, a new version of the Zap-O-Com is now available at a special user group price. This is one of the premier terminal communication programs available for OS/2. Again, I don't have the price at this time, but details will be available at the next meeting. 



A contact manager, FontFolder, and more

compiled by Esther Schindler

Here is a selection of OS/2 products released in the last month or so.

Clone Cleaner 2.10

Clone Cleaner finds duplicate files that take up precious space on your hard disk. If your hard disk is filling up with hard to manage directories of similar files and data, use Clone Cleaner to locate duplicate files across multiple disk drives, on both local and network drives.

Clone Cleaner can group files by name or by contents. So even if the file names are different and on different disk drives, if the contents are the same, Clone Cleaner can group them together and find the match. Clone Cleaner is the only disk utility capable of doing this. Of course, you can find duplicate files by file name also. Optionally, you can filter by file size range and by date range. Clone Cleaner can output an ASCII report file, a batch file, or a REXX script.

Clone Cleaner can be found at BMT Micro's Web site. Clone Cleaner is shareware, with a \$17.95 registration fee.

Animated mouse pointer

This program creates an animated mouse pointer for OS/2. Use the sample animations contained within the archive, or create your own animated mouse pointer. All you need is the OS/2 Icon Editor and some good ideas. Windows cursors, Windows animations, and AniMouse animation files are supported. This is a new WPS SOM class.

You can find this file as AMPTR100.ZIP in the OS2CENTRAL forum on CompuServe.

Contact Connection 2.0

Computer Interface Corporation's Contact Connection V2.0 is a native OS/2 Contact Manager. This version provides better integration and simplified linking of individuals to businesses, and makes it simpler to copy addresses to other applications.

Contact Connection is a fully graphical native OS/2 application that gives users total control over their contact information. Users can code their contacts in an infinite

number of ways and product pre-formatted labels, lists, and form letters in an instant.

Contact Connection stores unlimited phone numbers, addresses, and notes for any contact. Calling lists can be previewed on screen or printed on paper. With a modem installed, calling contacts becomes a fully automated point and click operation.

Contact Connection tracks activities associated with a contact, such as phone calls or letters, and it generates lists of action items to be completed. Users can associate files such as letters or spreadsheets with a contact, and launch those files from within Contact Connection.

Contact Connection is also an Omnifile compatible module. When users need to add Personal Information, database applications, or networked capabilities they simply upgrade to Omnifile; all their contacts are compatible and immediately available.

More product information and free demos are available on from www.computerinterface.com, at 800-992-3428, or sales@computerinterface.com. Contact Connection V2.0 has a list price of \$39.00.

Ortelius 1.0

Ortelius is an OS/2 desktop-mapping-program. It is useful for creating thematic maps easily. Maps may be exported or printed.

The shareware version of the OS/2 cartography program Ortelius is now available via LEO in Munich, Germany. It costs 60 DM to register the program.

Find Ortelius as ORTEL100.ZIP at <ftp://ftp.leo.org/pub/comp/os/os2/leo/apps/> or contact.cbressl@zedat.fu-berlin.de.

FontFolder 3.0

FontFolder is a native OS/2 font manager. It makes it easy for you to use large collections of Adobe Type 1 (ATM) or TrueType fonts in OS/2, without bogging down the system or generating hopelessly long font selection lists in applications. Font-

Folder provides rapid access to hundreds or even thousands of fonts, while keeping only a small number actually installed in OS/2 at any time.

FontFolder lets you browse and print fonts without having to install them; you can use fonts directly from CDROMs. You can also create font-packs that install whole collections of fonts as a unit. *OS/2 Magazine* (June, 1996) said, "I found FontFolder to be a very stable product that performed every font management function that I could possibly use."

Version 3.0 adds:

- TrueType support: FontFolder now supports TrueType fonts when used with OS/2 Warp 4. TrueType support is seamlessly integrated into FontFolder. FontFolder adds a Type 1 or TrueType icon alongside each font to identify it.
- Drag and drop support: FontFolder Version 3 brings the simplicity of drag-and-drop operations to fonts in OS/2. Installing and uninstalling fonts has never been easier. Drag and drop any Type 1 or TrueType font file on the FontFolder Installed Fonts List and the font is installed in OS/2.
- Font specifications: A new Font Specifications window associated with the Browser shows a selection of the technical details that OS/2 reports about a font.

FontFolder Version 3.0 can be downloaded from BMT Micro's Web site, or as FNT30.ZIP in library 1 on the CompuServe OS2BVEN forum. Shareware from PVsoft, \$30.

Internet Gate 1.0

Internet Gate is a multiple proxy gate and firewall. It can allow users on a Local Area Network (LAN) without Internet access to access the Internet through a single machine on the LAN connected to the Internet, either via a dial-up modem or ISDN connection or another ethernet card.

Internet Gate allows you to use:

- Email
- World Wide Web
- FTP



One bad software decision can ruin your whole day.

Let's face it . When it comes to choosing the right utilities for your OS/2 system, you can't afford to take risks. You need a proven set of disk, file, and desktop utilities which are reliable and effective. One that supports multi-gigabyte partitions, HPFS and FAT file formats, long file names, with both PM and command line utilities. With qualified product support representatives accessible from the internet, compuserve, phone or fax.

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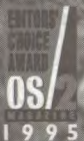
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random bits (cont)

- News
- Telnet

IGATE can save you money by removing the need to get a separate dial-up account, with phone line and modem for each user that wants access to the Internet. Now they can all use the one link, at the same time.

The shareware version is available from www.execpc.com/~marco/ or contact macca@arci01.bo.cnr.it (Marco Maccaferri).

PlanetWide Web server

Third Planet announced PlanetWide Web server 1.03b for OS/2, a true 32-bit, multi-threaded application. This version has a faster engine behind it.

For more information and a free trial copy of the software, visit www.pr.uoguelph.ca/cpayne/planet.htm. The site is powered by PlanetWide 1.03b.

REXX Reference

The fourth edition of the *REXX Reference Summary Handbook*, by Dick Goran, is now available. This new edition of the Handbook, which has been updated for OS/2 Warp 4, is a 228 page, "keyboard-side" companion which details all of the instructions and functions in SAA REXX distributed with OS/2 Version 2.1, OS/2 Warp Version 3, and OS/2 Warp Version 4.

The Handbook also documents all of the functions in the new REXX-UTIL API distributed on Warp 4 with Object REXX. The extensive index occupies an additional 38 pages. The table of contents for the Handbook is available for viewing at www.cfsrex.com/rrsh-4/ (where you can also purchase the volume directly).

The Handbook also contains all of the information necessary to create and maintain Workplace Shell objects in OS/2.

The Handbook (ISBN 0-9639854-3-4), which was awarded the *OS/2 Magazine* Editor's Choice award, is not intended as either a tutorial or a learner's guide. With its 40 page cross referenced index, the Handbook is an important tool that allows the novice REXX user and the REXX veteran alike to easily locate any needed function, as well as iden-

tifying the various functions which deal with a particular subject.

OpenIRC/2 v1.0

OpenIRC/2 is a 32-bit, multi-threaded PM IRC (Internet Relay Chat) network client. OpenIRC/2 takes full advantage of the OS/2 operating system. It has been designed with speed, power, and flexibility in mind.

OpenIRC/2's main attraction comes from its flexibility. It provides a strong foundation for third party hobbyists to create IRC scripts which can take advantage of the application's many features, including drag and drop support, menu support, and much more!

Download the latest version from <http://www.escape.com/~mikh/openirc.html> or at BMT Micro, www.bmtmicro.com.

LiDIA

LiDIA is a powerful C++ library for computational number theory which provides a collection of highly optimized implementations of various multiprecision data types and time-intensive algorithms. LiDIA is free for educational purposes.

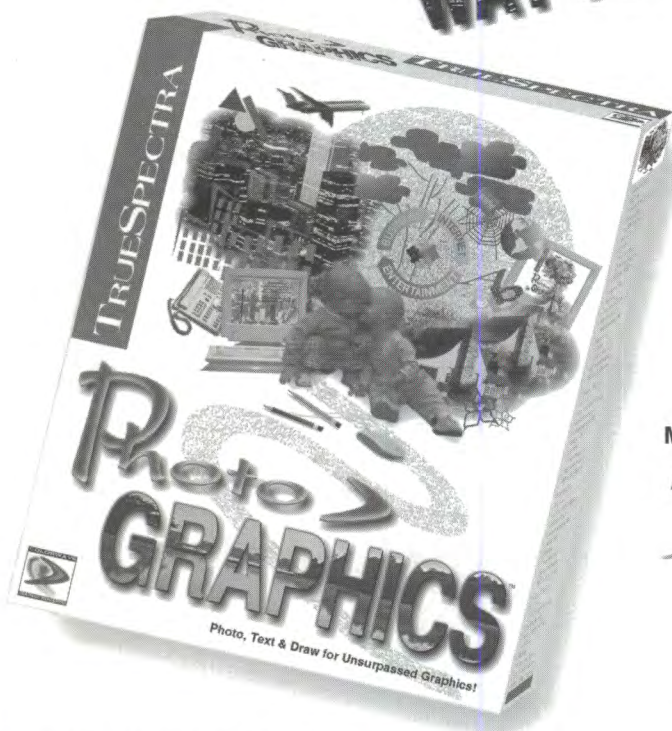
LiDIA is available from <ftp://informatik.th-darmstadt.de:/pub/TI/systems/LiDIA>

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The Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc

The Phoenix OS/2 Society is a computer user group dedicated to OS/2. We have been publishing our award-winning magazine, *extended attributes* since August of 1994, and we have members all over the world.

Yes, this is a user group publication, and that sometimes shows; however, that's also an advantage, since you get real-world feedback about OS/2 and OS/2 products from other users, not just jaded, cynical journalists.

How useful will it be to join the Phoenix OS/2 Society if you aren't in Arizona? We see the Phoenix OS/2 Society as something akin to the National Geographic Society or the Smithsonian; while most members only see a magazine, you're actually a member of a society, and can participate in its activities when you happen to be in the area.

Even without activities that take place in Phoenix, Society membership includes product discounts that alone could make membership worthwhile. Taking advantage of one such discount could easily save you the entire cost of membership, giving you a "free" subscription.

Plus, the Society is prominent in the computing community. We are *already* heard by IBM; they listen to what we say. Several IBM executives get *extended attributes*. They don't get it for the "club news"—they use it to learn what OS/2 users really care about. And they respond to what they read.

You're not just getting a magazine. You're getting a voice.

If you would like to continue to receive the magazine, fill out the membership form on page 13. We would love to have your voice join ours!



Invites you to join



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